

MAR 11 2009

Approved for use through 03/31/2009. OMB 0651-0031
U.S. Patent and Trademark Office: U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**Applicant Initiated Interview Request Form**Application No.: 10/507,520First Named Applicant: Hitoshi OnizawaExaminer: Sean P. Shechtman Art Unit: 2121Status of Application: Non-Final Rejection**Tentative Participants:**(1) Mr. Shechtman

(2) _____

(3) Richard Diefendorf (32390)

(4) _____

Proposed Date of Interview: March 12, 2009Proposed Time: 2:00 AM/PM (PM)**Type of Interview Requested:**(1) ☐ Telephonic(2) ☒ Personal(3) ☐ Video Conference**Exhibit To Be Shown or Demonstrated:**☒ YES☐ NOIf yes, provide brief description: Possible claim amendments (copy appended)**Issues To Be Discussed**

Issues (Rej., Obj., etc)	Claims/ Fig. #s	Prior Art	Discussed	Agreed	Not Agreed
(1) <u>112, 1st ¶</u>	<u>1/Fig. 3</u>	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) _____	_____	_____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

☐ Continuation Sheet Attached**Brief Description of Argument to be Presented:**

Possible claim amendments to be proposed to overcome 112, 1st ¶
objection/rejection. Please review, in particular, Figure 3 and description
appearing from line 16 on page 17 to line 25 on page 20 of application

An interview was conducted on the above-identified application on _____

NOTE: This form should be completed by applicant and submitted to the examiner in advance of the interview (see MPEP § 713.01).

This application will not be delayed from issue because of applicant's failure to submit a written record of this interview. Therefore, applicant is advised to file a statement of the substance of this interview (37 CFR 1.133(b)) as soon as possible.

Applicant/Applicant's Representative Signature

Examiner/SPE Signature

Typed/Printed Name of Applicant or Representative

Registration Number, if applicable

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.133. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.11 and 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 21 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

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PROPOSED CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently amended) A building sequence planning system for an automobile production line, said system comprising:

an input unit for inputting vehicle information of vehicles to be manufactured,

a processing unit for deciding an optimum building sequence based on the vehicle information inputted through said input unit, and

an output unit for externally outputting a building sequence schedule decided by said processing unit,

wherein said automobile production line is a mixed line including a first line and a second line respectively in parallel, and a third line branching from said ~~first~~ second line and joining with said first line ~~or said second line~~,

wherein said processing unit includes an initial offline sequence preparing unit for preparing an initial vehicle building sequence of the automobile production line based on the vehicle information ~~inputting~~ input to said input unit, ~~an initial lead-time developing unit for developing the building sequence to preceding and succeeding processes by a lead-time shifting for the automobile production line prepared by the initial vehicle building sequence prepared by said initial offline sequence preparing unit, a sequence evaluating unit for evaluating the building sequence based on conditions of an occupancy rate level, a minimum interval vehicle number, a maximum succeeding vehicle number, and a lot condition, as a penalty value, in accordance with restriction conditions,~~

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~~an offline point sequence preparing unit for preparing another pattern of the vehicle building sequence at the offline point, a lead time developing unit for developing the building sequence at the offline point for another pattern of the vehicle building sequence prepared by said offline sequence preparing unit by using a lead time shifting by employing the number of vehicles residing or accumulated between two processes, and an evaluation determining and storing unit for deciding a building sequence with a minimum penalty based on the penalty value evaluated by said sequence evaluation unit, wherein said processing unit propagates the building sequence in a point in the automobile production line between two processes in the automobile production line, which corresponds to an assembly completion point, to preceding and succeeding processes with lead time shifting by employing the number of vehicles residing or accumulated between two processes, thereby deciding an optimum building sequence for each of the preceding and succeeding processes, and wherein said sequence evaluating unit evaluates the building sequence for the mixture line, which is prepared by said initial lead time developing unit, as a penalty value based on a sum of satisfying degrees, at all the points where the lead time shifting has been done and operates to output said optimum building sequence~~
by (i) calculating an evaluation value from the vehicle information, including an initial automobile building sequence, input to said input unit, and storing the evaluation value, (ii) calculating a new evaluation value from another, new automobile building sequence, (iii) comparing the new evaluation value with the stored evaluation value, (iv) adopting the new automobile building sequence

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when the new evaluation value is improved, (v) discarding the new automobile building sequence when the new evaluation value is not improved, (vi) ending processing when repetitive searches have been completed, and (vii) outputting a most recently adopted automobile building sequence as said optimum building sequence.

2-3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) A building sequence planning system for an automobile production line according to Claim 1, ~~wherein, in a mixed line including branches and joints, said lead time developing unit calculates a different lead time for each vehicle by employing~~ wherein the vehicle information includes information relating to the number of vehicles residing or accumulated between two processes, and propagates the building sequence to preceding and succeeding processes with lead time shifting, thereby deciding the building sequence for each of the preceding and succeeding processes.

5. (Currently amended) A building sequence planning system for an automobile production line according to Claim 4, ~~wherein, for~~ wherein the vehicle information includes information relating to when a vehicle which has to pass a line twice because of work for two-tone color painting, the lead time is modified by adding a time or the number of vehicles.

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6-13. (Canceled)